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The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE.

JOHN xi. 25.

This is "the Life"! Not that he came again
Into these misty twilights of the earth,
But that he rose at once from death and pain
To Heaven's immortal birth!

This is "the Resurrection"! No mere form
Out of death's gloom an hour's revisit given,
But the great Life above earth's change and storm,
Forever in God's heaven!

O death, that ever followeth after life!
O life, that ever cometh out of death!
Now do we know, in that great ceaseless strife,
'Tis Life that conquereth!

So "Christ is risen" is not alone their strain
Who can receive the ancient word of faith;
But for all hearts that hear, and not in vain,
His gospel—which each spring repeats again—
Of Life that conquers death.

—*Brooke Herford.*

THE OLD AND NEW VIEW OF THE HEREAFTER.

"*And now abide these three, Faith, Hope, and Love; but the greatest of these is Love.*"—1 COR. xiii. 13.

According to the old view, death was a terrible event which revolutionized everything. To die was to go into a world wholly different from this world; to leave this beautiful and wonderful nature, and to pass into a region of purely spiritual existence. It was the end of probation, the end of all opportunity for repentance and faith.

Not so the view taken by the modern theology. That says "What God is to us here he will be to us there." He punishes us here, "not for his pleasure, but for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness." If he punishes us there, it will be for the same purpose,—to discipline, purify, and elevate the soul. If, in this world, God lets his sun shine and his rain fall on the evil and the good, then in the other world he will do the same. He will make all his children as happy as they are capable of being. He will give to them all opportunities of improvement. Death, therefore, in the theology of reason, ceases to be an awful change. It is transition: it is a step forward, onward, upward. We shall be no more surprised at finding ourselves in the other world than we were at finding ourselves in this world. Softly we were cradled into existence here: gently we shall be lifted into existence there. There, as here, we shall be in a world of surrounding beauty and wonder; there, as here, our faculties will be aroused by nature around us; there, as here, we shall find ourselves born into a home and a society; there, as here, by slow degrees we shall understand our new home and our new work.

Jesus seems to intimate this when he says, "Whoso liveth and believeth in me shall never die." "That spirit which is in me, if it exist in you, will carry you upward and onward, will be the resurrection and the life." It is no magical influence which Jesus exercises on the soul. Faith in him is no talisman, but a moral power. It gives us the principle within by which, when we enter the next world, we shall rise to higher

societies, to larger views of being, and to an ampler love.

When we seek to know what heaven is to be there, we must ask what it is here; for certainly the kingdom of heaven comes also in this world. There are hours of heavenly peace in this life. We sit sometimes in heavenly places with Jesus even now. Heaven is the peace of God which passeth understanding.

Now, this heaven below comes from the three elements which are to abide,—faith, hope, and love. Faith means the sight of the invisible reality which is below the passing appearance. It is the evidence of the reality of truth, goodness, wisdom. We endeavor to know, because we believe there is really something to be known. Faith, therefore, is the condition of knowledge. And what a joy and peace come to the soul from knowledge,—knowledge of the laws of the universe, knowledge of the divine work in history, knowledge of our capacity of improvement, knowledge of Christ as a personal friend and benefactor!

Knowledge, then, abides in the other world because faith abides,—faith, which is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. No doubt, new varieties of knowledge, hidden arcana, occult mysteries of being, will there be opened to us. Here, we see, as in a glass, darkly; there, face to face. We may then know the nature of life, the nature of the soul, the enigma of moral freedom, the cause and reason of the existence of evil, the vast hierarchy of spiritual existence above us, all of which are hidden from us here. But, as knowledge enlarges, faith will extend itself further, and root itself more deeply in the soul. Far beyond what we know will be our trust in the unknown abysses of divine being.

And hope also will continue in the other life, and this means that there will be progress hereafter as well as here. To hope means to look forward to something better; but, unless that something better can be reached, the hope must perish. Therefore, continued hope implies continued progress. It means constant growth and development. It means ever-increasing knowledge, activity, power; ever-increasing capacity for spiritual improvement; a never-ceasing ascent toward God,—powers growing more angelic, activity becoming more divine. All this is hinted at in the statement that hope abides.

If Jesus came to seek and to save those who are lost, if his heavenly spirit was devoted to helping the sinful and degraded and bringing the wanderer back to his Father's house, why may it not be a part of the work of ascended souls to labor with Christ for the redemption of this world? These angels may be all around us, these pure spirits, seeking to restrain us from evil and influence us to good.

And therefore we may say, as the surest of all certainties, that love will abide,—love of those who are above us in grandeur and beauty, love for those who are close beside us in sympathy and fellowship, love toward those who are most helpless and needy,—the souls which sit furthest down in darkness and the shadow of death. The highest seraphs nearest the throne of God must come to the most desperate and most forlorn.

According to the new theology, the angels and seraphs see God in his creatures. They come near to the Great Throne of Glory, not by looking up and forgetting all below, but by going with Jesus to seek and save the lost. Can Jesus be satisfied in sitting at the right hand of God in personal bliss, while his work below is still so poorly done, his church here so imperfect, his great redemption unfulfilled? When he said, "Lo! I am with you alway, even to the end of the world" did not that declaration truly show that, in going up, he was not going away? Whenever any tyranny of man over man gives way, Christ comes; whenever the poor and despised are elevated, Christ comes; whenever the lowly are fed with the bread of life, Christ comes. He comes to you and me whenever we are enabled to deny ourselves and take up our cross for truth and justice. And with him also come the spirits of those who have lived for us and loved us, who still love us and live for us; for they, too, when they go up, do not necessarily go away.

All this argument is founded on what we know by our experience of the essential nature of the gospel of Christ. If we know anything certainly of this great revelation through Jesus, we know it as a revelation of love. The love of Christ constrains us to a love of humanity. Christ lived and died for all, not chiefly for the good, the pious, the virtuous, the advanced and superior souls, but for poor, struggling, sinful mortals, beset by easy temptation, fighting with poor success against evil habits, longing to be better, but so discouraged, helpless, forlorn.

. . . . . .

Shall we know each other in the other world? Yes, far better than we know each other here. The progress of man implies a more intimate knowledge of his fellow-man. Man, in his lower state, does not enter very deeply into the souls of those nearest to

him. As he ascends, he knows them better. He understands more of their character, hopes, purposes, needs, qualities, defects, and so is able to help them much more effectually. But, still, how little we know of each other, how difficult is communication, how hard to tell what is within us! How we misunderstand each other! How we misinterpret each other's motives! How seldom comes an hour of real intercourse, when soul speaks to soul! But, in the higher world, I believe we shall enter easily and naturally into the most intimate communion, shall know as we are known. There all disguises and concealments, all diffidence and distrust, shall fall away from the soul; and we shall have the joy, perhaps the highest joy we have known on earth, of coming into intimate union with those we love. The heart-rending misunderstandings of this life will cease. The cruelties born of ignorance will be no more. The harsh, cold, bitter judgments we pass on each other will be left behind.

If, in a long life here, I have gained anything which is worth keeping, it is the knowledge and friendship and love of pure, generous, noble souls. Am I to lose that great inheritance? Am I to go into the other world poor, lonely, homesick, alone? Am I to console myself by being an unembodied spirit, wandering solitary among the stars or filling space with no home, no society, no brotherhood? I do not so understand the lessons of experience or the facts of observation. When all other memory fades from the mind of the dying, when his other thoughts are bewildered, the other impressions of time effaced, he still shows by a faint pressure of the hand, by a feeble sign of his head, that his love remains. The last look of the dim eye seeks the faces of those he loves. The last faint whisper of the failing voice is a murmur of blessing on those dear ones. Love is stronger than death: will it not survive the grave?—*James Freeman Clarke.*

THE STILL HOUR.

THERE IS NO DEATH.

There is no death! The stars go down
  To rise upon some fairer shore;
And bright in Heaven's jewelled crown
  They shine for evermore.

There is no death! The dust we tread
  Shall change beneath the summer showers
To golden grain or mellow fruit,
  Or rainbow tinted flowers.

The granite rocks disorganize
  To feed the hungry moss they bear;
The forest leaves drink daily life
  From out the viewless air.

There is no death! The leaves may fall;
  The flowers may fade and pass away;
They only wait through wintry hours
  The coming of the May.

There is no death! An angel form
  Walks o'er the earth with silent tread;
He bears our best loved things away,
  And then we call them "dead."

He leaves our hearts all desolate;
  He plucks our fairest, sweetest flowers;
Transplanted into bliss, they now
  Adorn immortal bowers.

And where he sees a smile too bright,
  Or heart too pure for taint and vice,
He bears it to that world of light,
  To dwell in Paradise.

Born unto that undying life,
  They leave us but to come again;
With joy we welcome them—the same
  Except in sin and pain.

And ever near us, though unseen,
  The dear immortal spirits tread,
For all the boundless universe
  Is life—there are no dead.

—*Sir E. Bulwer Lytton.*

EASTER.

Easter is the time when we bring the roots and seeds of our diviner life out of the cellar into the sun, to plant them afresh, and tend them, and be glad for the promise, as they spring forth into the light. It is the time to sit in the sunshine and sing of our hope, let who will sit blinking with the owls among the ivy, which flourishes only on decay; it is the time to cry with the poet:—

"I hold it truth, with him who sings
  To one clear harp in divers tones,
  That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things."

—*Robert Collyer.*

A Voice grows with the growing years;
  Earth, hushing down her bitter cry,
Looks upwards from her graves, and hears,
  "The Resurrection and the Life am I."

—*The Shadow and the Light.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed here.

OFFERS.

The Brighton Committee offers the following. Please apply to Miss Carrie L. Murdock, 320 Allston Street, Coolidge Corner, Mass.: "La Poudre aux Yeux," Comédie; "Le Roi des Montagnes," Edmond About; Macmillan's Progressive French Course, 1 and 2; Hachette's Illustrated Primary French Reader; "La Mère de la Marquise," Edmond About; "Inductive Psychology," Kirkpatrick; "Outlines of Psychology," Sully; "Caesar's Commentaries on the Gallic War"; "Frederick the Great"—a history; "Elements of Natural Philosophy," Avery; Metcalf's English Grammar; "The Age of Anne"; "History Lessons in Astronomy," Young; "Exercises in Rhetoric and Composition," Carpenter; Eysenbach's German Grammar; First German Book; "Tag, or The Chien Bull Dog," Valance J. Patriarche; "From the Hudson to the Neva," David Ker; "Homoselle," Round Robin Series; "The Red Mustang," W. O. Stoddard; *American Architect and Building News*, 1908–1909; *Inland Architect*, 1907–1908; *Good Housekeeping*, 1913–1914. *Atlantic Monthly*, 1914, is offered by Miss Jane W. Kennedy, 634 Canton Avenue, Milton, Mass.

REQUESTS.

1. I thank you for *To-day's Magazine* I received last year. Juanita, my little girl, has been sick so much this winter I have had but little opportunity to write and have lost some of the addresses. All reading and correspondence will be appreciated, for now I can enjoy both as Juanita seems to be well, and is going to school. She, too, wishes to receive reading. Thanking all *Cheerful Letter* friends who have remembered us since my husband's death, I pray for God's richest blessings on all, for they have been friends in need and have helped me pass so many lonely hours, though miles away. Address, Mrs. Annie Cooley, Knowles, New Mexico.

2. I should like so much to have current numbers of *Woman's Home Companion* or the *Ladies' Home Journal* for 1916. I have three small children and am kept closely at home. I enjoy good reading and am not able to purchase any. I will pass it on to others. The children (ages nine, seven, and two years) are anxious for story and picture books. Thanking you for past favors and for the *Cheerful Letter*, I am Mrs. A. E. Hicks, Monroe, Virginia, R. D. 1.

3. I am asking for a Bible, small size, for my niece Hattie Hudson, Norwood, North Carolina, R. F. D. 2. Also any good reading will be appreciated. She lives on rented land and is shut in most of the time. My post-office has been changed from Shankle, North Carolina, to Norwood, North Carolina. Fannie Singleton.

4. I live in the country. I have three small children and should like to get some good books or papers to read. I am very lonely. For reference, apply to Rev. J. F. Burg, Marshville, North Carolina, R. F. D. 5. Address, Mrs. Covie C. Nance, Polkton, North Carolina, R. F. D. 3.

5. Will some one send me the following: the *Woman's Home Companion*, *Pictorial Review*, and *Delineator?* I should appreciate these so much, and they will help me in my work. Address, Helen Lyon, Greenville, North Carolina, E. T. S., Box 130.

6. I live in the country on a farm eight miles from town. I am twelve years old, and in the fifth grade at school. I am very fond of and should be glad of some reading, which I can share with my brothers and sisters younger than I. I should appreciate scraps of any kind for quilts. As this is my first letter I refer you to Rev. A. S. Vaughn, R. 1, Athens, Tennessee, R. D. 8. Address, Miss Annie Vaughn, Athens, Tennessee, R. D. 8.

7. My sister and I would be very glad to receive good reading matter. Our father has a small farm and a large family to support. Rev. C. M. Triplett of Elkville, North Carolina, is our pastor. We should like "Pilgrim's Progress." Effie and Roxie Anderson, Hendrix, North Carolina.

8. I should like very much to become a member of your correspondence club. I am a farmer's wife and the mother of three children. Was raised in the city, and at first the country was rather lonely, but after all, I rather like it. I greatly enjoy reading; it is one of my chief pleasures. I like most of the magazines, fiction, etc. I should greatly appreciate a book or two for my little girl four and a half years old,—picture books of simple stories for children.

I refer you to the Rev. L. L. Smith of Ansonville, North Carolina. Address, Mrs. Zach. C. Allen, Polkton, North Carolina, R. D. 3. Box 6.

9. I am living in the country, twelve miles from town, in a community where books and magazines are scarce. Any good magazines would be much appreciated, especially the *Etude* or *Literary Digest*. I cannot get these except through the generosity of the *Cheerful Letter* readers. Address, Mrs. G. L. Day, Iona, Florida.

10. Mrs. Henry Nelson, Critz, Virginia, R. D. 1, asks for anything on crocheting or fancy work, and any general reading. She would like to have her birthday remembered, July 14.

11. Please accept my sincere thanks for the dear little *Cheerful Letter*. I enjoy it so much. I should be very much pleased if you would send "The Power of Womanhood," by Ellice Hopkins; "Peace and Happiness," Lord Avebury; and the back numbers of *The Pictorial Review*, that have the story, "The Heart of Rachel," to my sister, or any other good reading. Address, Miss Fannie M. Cannaday, Rising Sun, Maryland. Fannie and father are very lonely since mother's death, and they live in the country among strangers. I remain, Mrs. A. N. Whipple, Shaw Mansion, New London, Connecticut.

12. I should appreciate any good books and magazines. May I ask for the *Youth's Companion* and *Modern Priscilla?* I give as reference Mr. Vernon, Missionary Baptist minister, Hobgood, North Carolina. Address, Mrs. W. H. Hyde, Speed, North Carolina.

13. I have intended writing you for some time to thank the *Cheerful Letter* friend that sent me the *Ladies' Home Journal*. I enjoyed every number to the fullest extent. I shall appreciate any good literature and will pass it on to some lonely person. Address, Miss Mabel Wilson, Whitaker's, North Carolina.

14. It has been a long time since I have received any reading from any of you, and as I am going to move into a strange neighborhood, and am not able to leave home very much, I should like some good books and magazines for myself, also some picture books for my small children. Should also like to receive some scraps for quilts, especially some bright bits of silk and some nice cottons. I pray for God's best blessings on all *Cheerful Letter* friends everywhere. My address will still be Mrs. Lena Town, Toronto, Kansas.

15. Miss Jessie Brannock, Altamahaw, North Carolina, is anxious for an English dictionary.

16. I should love to have some good reading, cards, and pictures. I should like to have the book of Mother Goose and crayons. I will send for reference Rev. O. P. Ruth, Danbury, North Carolina. Bessie Smith, Campbell, North Carolina.

17. Mrs. M. E. Decker, Springfield, Missouri, asks for "Tanglewood Tales" and "Life of Queen Elizabeth." Address at 402 W. Lynn Street.

18. Nellie Mae Sharpe, Yadkin Valley, North Carolina, a twelve-year-old girl living in the country, asks for reading, which she will pass along.

19. I am thirteen years old and live in the country. I am going to school and am in the eighth grade. I should be glad to receive some books, and I should like very much to have "Girl of the Limberlost" and "Robinson Crusoe." Marjorie Loring, North Perry, Maine.

20. Rev. W. R. Chapman, Lebanon Church, Virginia, writes: "Please send me Tharkles's and Schwill's 'European History'; Schwill's 'Political History of Modern Europe'; Feilden's 'A Short Constitutional History of England'; 'Epochs in American History,' volumes 1, 2, 3. Ely's 'Outlines of Economics'; Mourse's 'History of Education.' Thank you for these books. I am doing a correspondence work in them, and need them."

21. Mrs. F. B. Triplett, Peggs, Oklahoma, will be grateful for magazines. It has been a long time since she has received any.

22. I thank my kind friends for the cheering letters and books and magazines they have sent me. I should like to be remembered with good books and magazines, as I am almost a confirmed invalid, and pass all my time at home. I should especially like the books "Lavender and Old Lace" and "The Harvester"; or any good books other friends are through with. I am also fond of flowers and should be so glad to receive any bulbs or slips, especially of chrysanthemums or roses. Address, Mrs. Eliza A. Carleton, Boomer, North Carolina.

23. Light stories will be appreciated by Mrs. Will Allen, Polkton, North Carolina, Route 3.

24. Mrs. Flora Helms, R. D. 2, Marshville, North Carolina, writes: "I thank all for reading matter and cards. I should very much like to have some again, as I am not well this winter and have to sit most of the time. Should be glad of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' for son of eleven; and shall appreciate anything for a family of eight children from eleven to two years old."

25. I have three children: Paul aged eleven; Eulamae nine; Eugene six. They go to school. Paul is in the fifth grade; Eulamae in the fourth. I should like some books for them: Book on china-painting; poetry for children. These books will be very much appreciated. I send as reference Rev. M. C. Brenner, Englewood, Tennessee. Address, Mrs. Mary B. Jones, Tillico Plains, Tennessee.

26. As I have not heard from the *Cheerful Letter* for quite a while, and miss the interesting books and papers I received, I write to say that I should appreciate more reading for myself and family, and I am most desirous of a dictionary. Please address, Mrs. Mollie Eanes, Bassett, Virginia.

27. I thank each of you who has been kind to me in the past and hope you will still remember me. I wish some one would please send me the back numbers—February, March, and May, 1915—of the *Ladies' Home Journal*. I should also like the *Youth's Companion;* and any popular music will be appreciated. Please don't forget to send the *Cheerful Letter*. Address, Mrs. W. H. Harris, Pleasant View, Virginia.

28. Will you please send me some good books and papers to read? I am getting old and my children are all married and gone, and I am very lonesome. Address, Mrs. W. A. B. Watson, Whittle's Depot, Virginia.

29. I am fourteen years old and my mother is dead. I am the oldest girl. I have four brothers and two little sisters,—one baby brother. I have a hard time and cannot go to school for I have to stay home and see after my home duties. Will not some kind friend send me some reading for myself and little sisters and brothers? Will you please write me some cheery letters? I get so lonely. My papa is so poor, he can't buy us reading; it takes all he can make to keep us. I send Rev. L. L. Smith of Ansonville, North Carolina, for reference. I do hope that you will print my letter and that I will soon get some reading. I have to work very hard in the field. We work rented land and have to give a part of our crop. Address, Jennie B. Shepard, Ansonville, North Carolina.

30. Mrs. E. A. Cooper, Vulcan, Virginia, asks for any good reading.

31. Mrs. M. L. Earley, Hiwassee, Virginia, is a young married woman with three little boys four and two years and six months old. Her husband has tuberculosis and has to sleep out of doors. She would be grateful for scraps of gingham, calico, etc., to piece quilts.

32. Mrs. D. Joyce, Stuart, Virginia, R. D. 5, Box 24, asks for post-cards to help her pass her lonely hours. She is sixty-three years of age and in poor health.

33. I have not received any reading lately and should now like some scraps for patchwork. I have seven children, the oldest seventeen and the youngest over a year old. I should like picture books for the little ones. The oldest ones would like drawing and writing books; and any suitable reading would be appreciated. Address, Mrs. S. M. Turner, Dodson, Virginia, Box 10.

34. Rev. J. H. Lane, Athens, Tennessee, Route 1, asks for reading for his five grandchildren, who have neither father nor mother. (Ages not given.)

35. Ethel Sneed, Athens, Tennessee, Route 8, a poor girl, asks for magazines and a Testament.

36. Mrs. P. F. Laurence, Glade Hill, Route 1, Box 47, Virginia, asks for "Ben Hur."

37. The *Ladies Home Journal* is asked for by Mrs. Lessie B. Rea, Spencer, Virginia, R. D. 3.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Mrs. Carrie Maulden from Ansonville, North Carolina, to Mt. Gilead, Route 2, North Carolina.

Mrs. R. Leslie Cummings, now at Stony Brook Farm, R. 1, to South Paris, Maine.

Mrs. Alice Burns from Bridgeport to Georgeville, North Carolina.

Mrs. Lucinda McIntyre from Big Lick to Oakboro, North Carolina.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

JUSTICE FOR CHILDREN.

George McDonald in one of his novels gives a fine piece of advice to parents, which I should like to see universally followed. He says, "Always find time to consider and settle your children's little disputes and quarrels."

Most parents are too apt to go upon the theory that when there is a quarrel, there is wrong on both sides, and therefore, there is no need of paying attention to it. Some do worse than this. They are apt to punish and blame the child that complains and cries or retaliates.

Weak governments purchase peace by siding with the aggressor.

A mother is annoyed and disturbed by a child crying or speaking angrily, and she forgets that there may be some cause for this. I have heard a mother, in other respects a sensible and intelligent woman, say to her children, "I cannot give the time to settling your disputes," and she seemed not to know that by this method she offered a premium to the tyrant and was also in danger of forming a habit of crushing the victim. She went on the theory that whenever there was a quarrel, both sides were equally to blame; but her practice really was to punish the girl, because, like many mothers, she made a special idol of the boy.

Miss Edgeworth has something to answer for in this, I think, because she makes one of her parents follow that theory. Miss Edgeworth's mistake was that she did not allow enough for character and laid too much stress upon education. This made her think that children were very much alike and one is likely to be as much to blame as another, but unfortunately the parents who follow her in this respect, made this excuse for saving themselves trouble and are liable to encourage the domineering child in his selfishness and wilfulness, and cause great suffering to those who are unjustly treated. For to a child injustice is unendurable. As we grow older and have experience of life, we do not expect to receive justice, but in childhood the shocks of these experiences cause great and needless pain.

Another form of injustice is that some mothers always oblige the elder child to give up to the younger one. Right or wrong, the younger one must have its way, and the older one is made slave to his whims. We hear such mothers say, "Now you do everything that your little brother wants you to." What wonder that later there is constant bickering and ill-will among the children, and then the mother says, "Why, children, can't you play pleasantly together?" Whereas all this might have been prevented by giving a little time and thought to governing the children in the first principles of justice and common sense.

L. F. C.

NATURAL HISTORY.

APRIL.

Its name has an indescribable charm to me. Its two syllables are like the call of the first birds—like that of the phœbe bird or of the meadow-lark. . . .

Then its odors! I am thrilled by its fresh and indescribable odors—the perfume of the bursting sod, of the quickened roots and rootlets, of the mould under the leaves, of the fresh furrows. No other month has odors like it. . . .

The season of which I speak does not correspond with the April of the almanac in all sections of our vast geography. It answers to March in Virginia and Maryland, while in parts of New York and New England, it laps well over into May.

Among April sounds there is none more welcome or suggestive to me than the voice of the little frogs piping in the marshes. No bird-note can surpass it as a spring token; and as it is not mentioned, to my knowledge, by the poets and writers of other lands, I am ready to believe it is characteristic of our season alone. You may be sure April has really come when this little amphibian creeps out of the mud and inflates its throat. We talk of the bird inflating its throat, but you should see this tiny minstrel inflate *its* throat, which becomes like a large bubble and suggests a drummer boy with his drum slung very high. In this drum, or by the aid of it, the sound is first produced. Generally the note is very feeble at first and only one voice will be heard, but soon he is joined by others and still others, till in due time, say towards the last of the month, there is a shrill musical uproar, as the sun is setting, in every marsh and bog in the land. It is a plaintive sound, and I have heard people from the city speak of it as lonesome and depressing, but to the lover of the country it is a pure spring melody. The little piper will sometimes climb a bulrush, to which he clings like a sailor to a mast, and sends forth his spring call.—*John Burroughs, from chapter on April, in "Birds and Poets."*

CHILDREN'S CLASSICS.

THE GOLDEN TOUCH.

(Continued from last number.)

"Such a misfortune! All the beautiful roses that smelled so sweetly and had so many lovely blushes, are blighted and spoiled. They are grown quite yellow, as you see this one, and have no longer any fragrance. What can be the matter with them?"

"Pooh, my dear little girl! pray don't cry about it!" said Midas, who was ashamed to confess that he himself had wrought the change which so greatly afflicted her. "Sit down and eat your bread and milk. You will find it easy enough to exchange a golden rose like that, which will last hundreds of years, for an ordinary one, which would wither in a day."

"I don't care for such roses as this!" cried Marygold, tossing it contemptuously away. "It has no smell, and the hard petals prick my nose."

The child now sat down to table, but was so occupied with her grief for the blighted roses that she did not even notice the wonderful transmutation of her china bowl. Perhaps this was all the better, for Marygold was accustomed to take pleasure in looking at the queer figures and strange trees and houses that were painted on the circumference of the bowl, and these ornaments were now entirely lost in the yellow hue of the metal.

Midas, meanwhile, had poured out a cup of coffee; and, as a matter of course, the coffee-pot, whatever metal it may have been when he took it up, was gold when he set it down. He thought to himself that it was rather an extravagant style of splendor, in a king of his simple habits, to breakfast off a service of gold, and began to be puzzled with the difficulty of keeping his treasure safe. The cupboard and the kitchen would no longer be a secure place of deposit for articles so valuable as golden bowls and coffee-pots.

Amid these thoughts he lifted a spoonful of coffee to his lips, and sipping it, was astonished to perceive that the instant his lips touched the liquid it became molten gold, and the next moment hardened into a lump.

"Ha!" exclaimed Midas, rather aghast.

"What is the matter, father?" asked little Marygold, gazing at him with the tears still standing in her eyes.

"Nothing, child, nothing," said Midas. "Eat your breakfast before it gets quite cold."

He took one of the nice little trouts on his plate, and, by way of experiment, touched its tail with his finger. To his horror, it was immediately transmuted from an admirably fried brook trout into a gold fish, though not one of those gold fishes which people often keep in glass globes as ornaments for the parlor. No; but it was really a metallic fish and looked as if it had been very cunningly made by the nicest goldsmith in the world. Its little bones were now golden wires, its fins and tail were thin plates of gold, and there were the marks of the fork in it, and all the delicate, frothy appearance of a nicely fried fish exactly imitated in metal. A very pretty piece of work, as you may suppose, only King Midas, just at that moment, would much rather have had a real trout in his dish than this elaborate and valuable imitation of one.

"I don't quite see," thought he to himself, "how I am to get any breakfast."

He took one of the smoking hot cakes, and had scarcely broken it, when, to his cruel mortification, though a moment before it had been of the whitest wheat, it assumed the yellow hue of Indian meal. To say the truth, if it had really been a hot Indian cake Midas would have prized it a good deal more than he now did, when its solidity and increased weight made him too bitterly sensible that it was gold. Almost in despair he helped himself to a boiled egg, which immediately underwent a change similar to those of the trout and the cake. The egg, indeed, might have been mistaken for one of those which the famous goose in the story book was in the habit of laying; but King Midas was the only goose that had had anything to do with the matter.

"Well, this is a quandary!" thought he, leaning back in his chair and looking quite enviously at little Marygold, who was now eating her bread and milk with great satisfaction. "Such a costly breakfast before me, and nothing that can be eaten!"

Hoping that, by dint of great despatch, he might avoid what he now felt to be a considerable inconvenience, King Midas next snatched a hot potato, and attempted to cram it into his mouth and swallow it in a hurry. But the golden touch was too nimble for him. He found his mouth full not of mealy potato, but of solid metal, which so burned his tongue that he roared aloud, and, jumping up from the table, began to dance and stamp about the room both with pain and affright.

"Father, dear father!" cried little Marygold, who was a very affectionate child, "pray what is the matter? Have you burned your mouth?"

"Ah, dear child," groaned Midas, dolefully, "I don't know what is to become of your poor father."

And truly, my dear little folks, did you ever hear of such a pitiable case in all your lives? Here was literally the richest breakfast that could be set before a king, and its very richness made it absolutely good for nothing. The poorest laborer sitting down to his crust of bread and cup of water was far better off than King Midas, whose delicate food was worth its weight in gold. And what was to be done? Already at breakfast Midas was excessively hungry. Would he be less so by dinner-time? And how ravenous would be his appetite for supper, which must undoubtedly consist of the same sort of indigestible dishes as those now before him! How many days, think you, would he survive a continuance of this rich fare?

These reflections so troubled wise King Midas that he began to doubt whether, after all, riches are the one desirable thing in the world, or even the most desirable. But this was only a passing thought. So fascinated was Midas with the glitter of the yellow metal that he would still have refused to give up the Golden Touch for so paltry a consideration as a breakfast. Just imagine what price for one meal's victuals! It would have been the same as paying millions and millions of money (and as many millions more as would take forever to reckon up) for some fried trout, an egg, a potato, a hot cake, and a cup of coffee.

"It would be quite too dear," thought Midas.

Nevertheless, so great was his hunger and the perplexity of his situation that he again groaned aloud, and very grievously too. Our pretty Marygold could endure it no longer. She sat a moment gazing at her father and trying with all the might of her little wits to find out what was the matter with him. Then, with a sweet and sorrowful impulse to comfort him, she started from her chair, and, running to Midas, threw her arms affectionately about his knees. He bent down and kissed her. He felt that his little daughter's love was worth a thousand times more than he had gained by the Golden Touch.

"My precious, precious Marygold!" cried he.

But Marygold made no answer.

Alas, what had he done? How fatal the gift which the stranger bestowed! The moment the lips of Midas touched Marygold's forehead a change had taken place. Her sweet, rosy face, so full of affection as it had been, assumed a glittering yellow color, with yellow teardrops congealing on her cheeks. Her beautiful brown ringlets took the same tint. Her soft and tender little form grew hard and inflexible within her father's encircling arms. Oh, terrible misfortune! The victim of his insatiable desire for wealth, little Marygold, was a human child no longer, but a golden statue!

Yes, there she was, with the questioning look of love, grief, and pity hardened into her face. It was the prettiest and most woeful sight that ever mortal saw. All the features and tokens of Marygold were there, even the beloved little dimple remained in her golden chin. But the more perfect was this resemblance, the greater was the father's agony at beholding this golden image, which was all that was left him of a daughter. It had been a favorite phrase of Midas, whenever he felt particularly fond of the child, to say that she was worth her weight in gold. And now the phrase had become literally true. And now at last, when it was too late, he felt how infinitely a warm and tender heart that loved him exceeded in value all the wealth that could be piled up betwixt the earth and sky.

It would be too sad a story if I were to tell you how Midas, in the fulness of all his gratified desires, began to wring his hands and bemoan himself, and how he could neither bear to look at Marygold, nor yet to look away from her. Except when his eyes were fixed on the image he could not possibly believe that she was changed to gold. But, stealing another glance, there was the precious little figure, with a yellow teardrop on its yellow cheek, and a look so piteous and tender that it seemed as if that very expression must needs soften the gold and make it flesh again. This, however, could not be. So Midas had only to wring his hands and to wish that he was the poorest man in the wide world if the loss of all his wealth might bring back the faintest rose-color to his dear child's face.

While he was in this tumult of despair he suddenly beheld a stranger standing near the door. Midas bent down his head without speaking, for he recognized the same figure which had appeared to him the day before in the treasure room and had bestowed on him this disastrous faculty of the Golden Touch. The stranger's countenance still wore a smile which seemed to shed a yellow lustre all about the room, and gleamed on little Marygold's image and on the other objects that had been transmuted by the touch of Midas.

"Well, friend Midas," said the stranger, "pray how do you succeed with the Golden Touch?"

Midas shook his head.

"I am very miserable," said he.

"Very miserable, indeed!" exclaimed the stranger. "And how happens that? Have I not faithfully kept my promise with you? Have you not everything that your heart desired?"

"Gold is not everything," answered Midas, "and I have lost all that my heart really cared for."

"Ah! so you have made a discovery since yesterday?" observed the stranger. "Let us see, then. Which of these two things do you think is really worth the most—the gift of the Golden Touch or one cup of clear cold water?"

"Oh, blessed water!" exclaimed Midas. "It will never moisten my parched throat again."

"The Golden Touch," continued the stranger, "or a crust of bread?"

"A piece of bread," answered Midas, "is worth all the gold on earth."

"The Golden Touch," asked the stranger, "or your own little Marygold, warm, soft, loving, as she was an hour ago?"

"Oh, my child, my dear child!" cried poor Midas, wringing his hands. "I would not have given that one small dimple in her chin for the power of changing this whole big earth into a solid lump of gold!"

"You are wiser than you were, King Midas," said the stranger, looking seriously at him. "Your own heart, I perceive, has not been entirely changed from flesh to gold. Were it so, your case would indeed be desperate. But you appear to be still capable of understanding that the commonest things, such as lie within everybody's grasp, are more valuable than the riches which so many mortals sigh and struggle after. Tell me now, do you sincerely desire to rid yourself of this Golden Touch?"

"It is hateful to me!" replied Midas.

A fly settled on his nose, but immediately fell to the floor, for it, too, had become gold. Midas shuddered.

"Go, then," said the stranger, "and plunge into the river that glides past the bottom of your garden. Take likewise a vase of the same water, and sprinkle it over any object that you may desire to change back again from gold into its former substance. If you do this in earnestness and sincerity, it may possibly repair the mischief which your avarice has occasioned."

King Midas bowed low, and when he lifted his head the lustrous stranger had vanished.

You will easily believe that Midas lost no time in snatching up a great earthen pitcher (but, alas me! it was no longer earthen after he touched it) and hastened to the riverside. As he scampered along and forced his way through the shrubbery, it was positively marvellous to see how the foliage turned yellow behind him, as if the autumn had been there and nowhere else. On reaching the river's brink he plunged headlong in, without waiting so much as to pull off his shoes.

"Poof! poof! poof!" snorted King Midas, as his head emerged out of the water. "Well, this is really a refreshing bath, and I think it must have quite washed away the Golden Touch. And now for filling my pitcher."

As he dipped the pitcher into the water it gladdened his very heart to see it change from gold into the same good, honest vessel which it had been before he touched it. He was conscious also of a change within himself. A cold, hard, and heavy weight seemed to have gone out of his bosom. No doubt his heart had been gradually losing its human substance and transmuting itself into insensible metal, but had now softened back again into flesh. Perceiving a violet that grew on the bank of the river, Midas touched it with his finger, and was overjoyed to find that the delicate flower retained its purple hue, instead of undergoing a yellow blight. The curse of the Golden Touch had therefore really been removed from him.

King Midas hastened back to the palace, and I suppose the servants knew not what to make of it when they saw their royal master so carefully bringing home an earthen pitcher of water. But that water, which was to undo all the mischief that his folly had wrought, was more precious to Midas than an ocean of molten gold could have been. The first thing he did, as you need hardly be told, was to sprinkle it by handfuls over the golden figure of little Marygold.

No sooner did it fall on her than you could have laughed to see how the rosy color came back to the dear child's cheek, and how she began to sneeze and sputter, and how astonished she was to find herself dripping wet and her father still throwing more water over her.

"Pray do not, dear father!" she cried. "See how you have wet my nice frock, which I put on only this morning."

For Marygold did not know that she had been a golden statue, nor could she remember anything that had happened since the moment when she went with outstretched arms to comfort poor King Midas.—*Nathaniel Hawthorne, in "The Wonder Book."*

(*To be continued.*)

Learn to cultivate a wise reliance, based not upon what you hope, but on what you perform.—*J. A. Garfield.*

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Mr. Henry A. Jenks, 45 Spring Lane, Canton, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address plainly (not necessarily for publication) and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

I.

CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.

In map, but not in drawing.
In art, but not in picture.
In tent, but not in house.
In rain, but not in snow.
In ink, but not in water.
In flour, but not in wheat.
In tiger, but not in lion.
In sea, but not in lake.
In day, but not in night.
In dahlia, but not in jonquil.
In year, but not in month.
My *whole* is a holiday in April.

II.

JUMBLED FLOWERS.

1. Enlddoogr.
2. Vexflgoo.
3. Ihdala.
4. Yyxseeadoi.
5. Hfausci.
6. Bbootthaelnusrc.
7. Qjnliou.
8. Peloterioh.
9. Oafdlfid.
10. Rilletgyi.

—*Selected.*

III.

HALF SQUARE.

1. Watery particles congealed into white or transparent crystals in the air, and falling to the earth.
2. A negative particle.
3. A conjunction.
4. A consonant.

IV.

ACROSTIC.

All of the words described contain the same number of letters. When rightly guessed and written one below the other, the diagonal beginning with the upper left-hand letter and ending with the lower right-hand letter spells the name of a famous author born in April and who also died in April.

1. A town in England famous for its abbey and castle.
2. The founder of Quebec.
3. A famous battle in ancient history.
4. A name sometimes given to Northern United States.
5. A mountain group in Eastern California.
6. A character in Tasso's "Secchia Rapita."
7. A famous queen.
8. A cathedral in England.
9. A county of Massachusetts.

Answers to puzzles in the March number.

I.

WELL-KNOWN WORKS OF FICTION.

1. Little Women. Louisa May Alcott.
2. Swiss Family Robinson. John R. Wyss.
3. David Copperfield. Charles Dickens.
4. The Heir of Redclyffe. Charlotte M. Yonge.
5. The Wide, Wide World. Susan Warner.
6. Robert Elsmere. Mrs. Humphry Ward.
7. The Vicar of Wakefield. Oliver Goldsmith.
8. Robinson Crusoe. Daniel Defoe.
9. Vanity Fair. William M. Thackeray.
10. Paul and Virginia. Bernardin de St. Pierre.
11. Kenilworth. Sir Walter Scott.
12. Uncle Tom's Cabin. Harriet Beecher Stowe.
13. Reveries of a Bachelor. Donald G. Mitchell.
14. Gulliver's Travels. Dean Swift.
15. The Newcomes. William M. Thackeray.
16. Never Too Late to Mend. Charles Reade.
17. Guy Mannering. Sir Walter Scott.
18. Undine and Sintram. F. La Motte Fouqué.
19. Westward Ho! Charles Kingsley.
20. Daisy Miller. Henry James.
21. The Man who Laughs. Victor Hugo.
22. Their Wedding Journey. William D. Howells.
23. Heart of Midlothian. Sir Walter Scott.
24. The Scarlet Letter. Nathaniel Hawthorne.
25. Ten Times One is Ten. Edward Everett Hale.
26. The Quick or the Dead. Amelie Rives.
27. Helen's Babies. John Habberton.
28. The Leavenworth Case. Anna K. Green.
29. The Count of Monte-Cristo. Alexander Dumas.
30. Nicholas Nickleby. Charles Dickens.
31. Daniel Deronda. George Eliot.
32. Last of the Mohicans. James F. Cooper.
33. The Marble Faun. Nathaniel Hawthorne.
34. Innocents Abroad. Mark Twain.
35. The Pilgrim's Progress. John Bunyan.
36. Little Lord Fauntleroy. Mrs. F. H. Burnett.
37. John Halifax, Gentleman. Miss Mulock.
38. Thaddeus of Warsaw. Jane Porter.
39. Adventures of Tom Sawyer. Mark Twain.
40. Last Days of Pompeii. Sir Bulwer Lytton.
41. Goodbye, Sweetheart. Rhoda Broughton.
42. Lorna Doone. Richard D. Blackmore.
43. Looking Backward. Edward Bellamy.
44. Arabian Nights. (Uncertain.)
45. Marjorie Daw. Thomas B. Aldrich.
46. Tom Brown's School Days. Thomas Hughes.
47. Tanglewood Tales. Nathaniel Hawthorne.
48. Hans Brinker. Mary Mapes Dodge.
49. The Water Babies. Charles Kingsley.
50. Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. Lewis Carroll.

II.

QUESTIONS IN HISTORY.

1. William III. of Orange.
2. Philip Van Artevelt of Ghent.
3. Nathan Hale.

III.

ORIGINAL ARITHMETIC.

1. One, tone. 2. One, lone. 3. Four, Flour. 4. Three, tree. 5. Two, to. 6. Five, fie.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

Any minister (of any sect) who receives this paper is cordially invited to distribute the copies of the *Cheerful Letter* received among lonely members of his parish, shut-ins, or invalids of whom he may know. He is also invited to write to our headquarters (see address on this page) and give names and addresses of those who may be cheered and helped by becoming our correspondents.

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The work has grown so it is no longer easy for the Book Club Secretary to care for all that pertains to the Club. The following ladies have volunteered to take charge of the different interests: For Bibles, either for requests or offers, apply to Mrs. Laura Hallett, 37 Pinckney Street, Boston, Mass. For scraps for patchwork, for requests or offers, to Mrs. E. H. Brigham, 72 Walnut Street, Brookline, Mass. For music, for requests or offers, to Mrs. Thomas Lacey, 145 Grand View Avenue, Wollaston, Mass.

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